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ART. I.—*Fidler's Observations on the United States.*

Observations on Professions, Literature, Manners and Emigration in the United States and Canada, made during a Residence in 1832, by the Rev. Isaac Fidler, for a short time Missionary of Thornhill on Yonge Street, near York, Upper Canada. New York. 1833.

THIS is another precious specimen of the class of books with which John Bull is now regularly *humbugged* three or four times a year, under the name of observations on the state of society, manners and literature in the United States. There is one important omission in the titles of these works, which renders them in fact a complete fraud upon the public. If they were called, as they ought to be, observations on the state of society, manners, and literature in the taverns, steamboats and stage-coaches of the United States, honest John would know what he was buying, and whether he was likely to get his money's worth. The very names of the persons who indite these burlesque itineraries are, in general, such as to prepare the reader pretty well for the ridicule with which they are regularly blasted, as soon as they appear. The last in the series was by Mrs. *Trollope*, and the one before us is by the Rev. Isaac *Fidler*. The worthy divine himself does not seem to be particularly delighted with his 'family cognomen,' as he learnedly calls it. He tells us, in his own inimita-

ble style, 'I never loved my musical name, and the next time I *voyage to the States* I may choose to have it altered.' The manner in which he supposes that this alteration is to be accomplished, will give a good idea of the correctness of his information respecting the political and legal institutions of the country.

'I was told, that a person in the States, who is dissatisfied with his surname,' (Christian names cannot it seems be altered) 'can easily have it changed to another more suitable to his taste and inclination. It was a subject of discussion sometimes, and the information I obtained was this, that a person, on *taking up his citizenship*, needs only go to a particular office appropriated to this purpose, and having selected another appellation, get it registered as his *family cognomen*, whereby he and his children may be designated afterwards. This, *if true*,' (there is much virtue in this *if*) 'must render the genealogies of families extremely difficult to trace: yet I must confess that it is very *accommodating* to persons of dubious character, to whom a change of surname must be a great *consideration*.'

It is pretty plain that the Rev. Mr. Fidler was *hoaxed* in regard to this matter, and we incline to think that this was an accident which happened to him not unfrequently during his *voyage to the States*. His immediate friends must in fact have taken strange liberties with him in this way, as appears from the following anecdote, which he gives upon the authority of 'a divine of eminence.'

'The clergy of America are prohibited by an act of the legislature from sitting in the *Chamber of Representatives*. This was not always the case, but was brought about after the following manner. One of the members of Congress, a clergyman, was very desirous that some permanent provision should be made for the Episcopal Church, and was urgent with a friend of his, a member also, to use his endeavors to accomplish it. This friend, probably annoyed by frequent solicitations, and being, as Americans in general are represented, a *summer's day friend*,' (an evident improvement upon Gray's *summer friend*) 'promised (*upon*) his word of honor that he would do something for the church. Accordingly he mentioned this circumstance in Congress on the first opportunity, and, *relating his promise*, moved that no clergyman should thenceforth sit in that House. The motion was carried by a vast majority, and cler-

gymen, with their golden anticipations, vanished from it forever. This was told me by a divine of eminence.'

After this, we shall doubtless hear no more of the famous *journée des dupes*. This ridiculous fable, which one of his clerical brethren probably amused himself with imposing upon the simplicity of our author as a piece of real history, is gravely quoted as such by the London Literary Gazette.

It is time, however, to introduce our author more particularly to the acquaintance of the reader, who is not yet aware of his personal character and pretensions. We have the honor then to inform him, that the Rev. Isaac Fidler was intended for the church, although he has failed to obtain employment in his profession, and received his education under the Rev. James Tate of Richmond, 'whose name,' he says, 'I found to be held in great esteem among scholars in America.' We would suggest *en passant* to Mr. Fidler, that there is a slight inconsistency between the purport of this passage, and that of another, in which he represents himself as telling Mr. John Pickering that he (Fidler) 'discovered the day after his arrival at New York, that there is no literature in the United States.' Where there is no literature there are of course no scholars, and where there are no scholars, it is impossible that scholars can hold in great esteem the Rev. James Tate. For ourselves, we are free to say that we never heard of the learned gentleman, until his name was made known to us by the labors of his still more erudite pupil.

The character and fortunes of the latter appear to resemble in some respects those of the celebrated tutor of Miss Lucy Bertram. The Rev. Mr. Fidler combines, in fact, the same *pro-di-gi-ous e-ru-di-ti-on* in the oriental languages with the same antique simplicity,—to give it no other name,—in regard to every thing that concerns the business of life, which distinguished the Rev. Mr. Sampson. He is not, however, quite so honest as the worthy Dominie, but evinces at times a decided disposition for drawing a long bow. He was educated, as we have said, for the church; but not having obtained, and, as he tells us himself, not being likely to obtain preferment, undertook to mend his fortune by teaching the Eastern languages to young men preparing for the service of the East India Company. In this occupation he also met with slight success, but does not inform us of the reasons of his failure. We only know, that finding no profitable employment at home,

he concluded to embark for this country, expecting to realize a rapid and brilliant fortune, by teaching Sanscrit and Hindostanee to the citizens of the United States. On arriving at New York, he determined, by way of recommending himself, to publish immediately a work, whether original or not does not appear, in the Sanscrit language, apparently forgetting that the people would not be able to read it, until they had first had the advantage of his instruction. This project was nipped in the bud by the wrongheadedness of the publisher to whom Mr. Fidler addressed himself, and who not only had no Sanscrit types at his disposal, but positively refused to import any, and even affirmed, that if Mr. Fidler would furnish him with a fount free of expense, he would not give it store-room ; so limited, in his opinion, was the demand for Sanscrit literature in this community.

Our author's other friends concurred in the main with the publisher, and advised him to give up the plan of a Sanscrit school and open one for the instruction of young men in Latin and Greek, and the other branches of a common liberal education. This was a feasible common-sense scheme, which, had it been acted on, would doubtless have succeeded ; but after much inquiry and long deliberation, our author seems to have been fairly frightened out of it by a brother pedagogue, who gave him an alarming account of the loose state of discipline in the American schools, and of a battle royal which he had recently had with his own pupils. We extract the passage containing this account, which, in the newspaper phrase, is somewhat 'curious if true,' but which merits confirmation. We incline to think that our author was in this, as in so many other instances, *hoaxed* by his fellow emigrant, who seems to have been a person of much more shrewdness than Mr. Fidler, and perhaps had it in view to keep a competitor out of the market. The story is as follows.

" "I regret," said he, " that I ever engaged in the school. I have been obliged to expel *eight* of my scholars. The noise and uproar of my school had been increasing every day, till at last it reached so high a pitch, that neither I nor my pupils could be distinctly heard. I reprimanded such as appeared most riotous, but some of them told me they would not be restrained by any English tyrant ; so I visited one of them with a stroke. Hereupon the whole school became a scene of anarchy. I was pelted on all sides, with books, and slates, and copies, and obliged to leave my seat. All the scholars pressed on, and endeavor-

ed to strike or kick me. I was compelled to take refuge behind a pillar, against which I placed my back, and protected myself in front, by a chair. Such as approached near enough I knocked down, and kept the whole rabble of them at bay. At last, snatching a piece of wood out of the hands of the oldest, I put my pupils on the defensive; and when I had completely subdued every appearance of resistance, I turned the ringleaders out of doors. Every symptom of insubordination has vanished; but you cannot conceive how much mortification I have experienced.”

The main difficulty with our author in regard to the establishment of a school, seems to have been an apprehension that he should not be permitted, by the usage of the country, to wield the birch with sufficient freedom, and should thus be materially abridged of what he appears to have regarded as the most enviable privilege of his office. We cannot undertake to answer for the state of things in this respect at New York, but we can venture to assure him that in Boston, at least, he would have found no cause of complaint. If he were placed at the head of one of our city schools, he would have no occasion to envy the whipping franchises of the masters of Westminster, Eton, or Harrow. Our boys are literally, what Sir Francis Burdett has so often declared his countrymen to be, a *flogged nation*. Such, if we are rightly informed, is the strictness of the discipline in our city schools, that the slightest failure in the performance of the literary exercises,—an error, for example, in the spelling of a single word,—is rewarded, *argent comptant*, by a most liberal administration of the birch or the ferule. A knowledge of this fact would have gone pretty far, we suspect, in removing the unfavorable impressions entertained by our author, respecting the state of professions, literature, manners and emigration in this country. For ourselves, with all our reverence for the ancient and venerable engines of scholastic rule to which we have just alluded, endeared to us, as they are, by the tenderest recollections of early years, we are yet free to say, that we think this one of the cases in which there may be too much even of a good thing. We recommend it to the city authorities, if, as we greatly doubt, they honor us so far as to read our poor lucubrations, to take this hint, lest the people should in process of time give them another of a broader description.

At the same time that he was making inquiry in regard to the practicability of establishing a school, Mr. Fidler, who has

more than one string to his bow, long as it is, was also endeavoring to procure a situation as a clergyman of the Episcopal Church, or a professor in a college. In these attempts, he was not much more successful than in the other. Most of the persons to whom he addressed himself for advice and assistance, received his advances in a very discouraging style. He had brought, it seems, good recommendations from England; but several persons hinted to him, that high recommendations from England 'are a man's greatest detriment.' Others, again, and Dr. Milnor among the number, assured him that 'such testimony is indispensable,' and advised him to write home for more. This, in our opinion, is a much more plausible view of the matter than the other. 'Many persons, capable of giving correct information, candidly informed him that no man, whatever be his worth or acquirements, has much chance of obtaining either collegiate or clerical promotion in the United States, unless he have personal influence with a majority of the electors.' We must own that we do not well see how the case could be otherwise. Where places are conferred by election, it would seem that a candidate can only be successful by securing, in one way or another, a personal influence with a majority of the electors. He was repeatedly asked if he would accept a situation in Ohio, and as repeatedly declined such a place of exile. 'My habits had fitted me for other scenes, and required more domestic comforts than a wilderness can furnish. Besides, I was early made acquainted with the sort of people I was likely to find for associates in places *remote from the frontier*. As I perceived that persons of the same standing, even in New York, are not the most amiable or *liberable*, I feared their manners would not be improved by contiguity to forests, bears, and Indians.' This is rather an unkind cut at the reverend gentleman's clerical acquaintance in New York, whose courtesy and kindness he elsewhere acknowledges in very warm terms. We would respectfully hint to Mr. Fidler that *liberable*, though it may doubtless pass for very good English at the school of the Rev. James Tate, has not yet gained admission into the *American* vocabulary. We would also suggest to him that, in the opinion of many discreet persons, Ohio is somewhat less *remote from the frontier* than New York.

In the course of these inquiries the winter wore away, and our author, already discouraged by most of their results in regard to the probability of accomplishing his objects, finally met

with an English lady established at New York, who advised him to give the matter up, and return at once to England. This advice appears to have been decisive with him, and he accordingly made up his mind at once to leave this country. We may remark in general, that our author possesses a wonderful docility to counsels of any kind, and governs himself in most cases by the last he receives. At this period he met with another of his countrymen, who advised him, before he returned, to visit Boston, which he forthwith did. We shall advert presently to his account of his adventures upon this excursion. On his return from Boston to New York, he waited on the British Consul, to obtain his assistance in making the arrangements for his departure, when the Consul strenuously urged him to try his luck in Canada. To Canada accordingly he went,—*coelum, si jusseris, ibit*:—and by his account he found it in fact an earthly paradise. He had come out to the United States a ‘thorough-going radical,’ but his experiences at New York had already converted him into as thorough-going a Tory, or in the modern phrase, *Conservative*: and as he could find nothing but ignorance, selfishness, vice and misery in the Republic of the United States, he was quite prepared to see every thing *couleur-de-rose* among our monarchical neighbors.

On arriving in Canada, he accordingly forgets his fastidiousness about a residence remote from the frontier, among forests, bears, and Indians; and after rejecting the pulpits of Ohio, actually accepts a missionary station at a place called Thornhill, on Yonge Street, on a salary of fifty pounds a year, where he established himself with his wife and family. This little place was too aristocratic to admit of the residence of any such plebeian characters as bakers or butchers, and Mr. Fidler’s lodgings being destitute of the accommodation of an oven, he was fain to subsist, as he best might, upon salted pork and unleavened bread. His lodgings were, in other respects, not of the most convenient description; ‘the upper rooms were merely lathed, but not plastered, and consequently could be seen into from the outside.’ Of furniture there was little or none to be had, and our worthy missionary would have been, to all appearance, obliged to rest his learned limbs upon the soft side of a deal board, had not ‘the lady of the house where I remained all night on my first ramble up Yonge Street, accommodated us most obligingly with a good feather-bed, which she permitted us to use during our residence at Thornhill.’ Such accommoda-

tions, one would suppose, could hardly have been satisfactory to a family, which had just been luxuriating among the down-beds and flesh-pots of the boarding-houses of New York and London. Our author, however, in the ardor of his new-born loyalty, endeavors to put a good face upon the matter, and enlarges at considerable length upon the *comforts* of his residence, although he rather inconsistently lets out, in his account of a chance conversation with a neighbor, that 'we are quite ashamed to be found in such lodgings, and *have been ill from vexation.*'

His neighbor consoled him by the assurance that his lodgings, such as they were, were 'a palace compared with the apartment which I and my family occupy,' and the Rev. Mr. Fidler, had he been left to himself, would probably have preferred to

———bear the ills we have,
Than fly to others which we know not of,—

and remained for life the missionary of Yonge Street, near York in Upper Canada. In this case, the literary world would have lost the benefit of his *Observations on Professions, Literature, Manners and Emigration in the United States.* This severe dispensation was averted by the timely intervention of Mrs. Fidler, who seems to be a pretty important person in the establishment, the Rev. Isaac being, from his account of the matter, not much better than *second dessus*, or in the common phrase, *second fiddle*, in his own orchestra. Mrs. Fidler had been very 'impatient to enter the parsonage house, and had *hastened him to take her* from York into the country, even should the house not prove so convenient in all respects as she could wish.' But no sooner had they taken possession of their lodgings, than 'dissatisfaction evinced itself. She grew more and more averse every hour to continue, and her first impressions could never be effaced.' 'Mrs. F. felt uncomfortable, and so frequently and loudly complained, that I often participated in her feelings when I should have experienced the reverse.'

There was, however, one agreeable circumstance about their situation, which served for a time as an off-set to all its inconveniences, and which throws much light upon the character of an interesting portion of the population of Upper Canada. 'The only thing during our Canadian residence,' says our author, 'with which Mrs. F. seemed to be amused, was the frequent visits which the cows and sheep of our landlady

made into the forests and pastures of other people, and which her neighbors' 'cows and sheep made into hers.' The interest felt by Mrs. F. in this 'reciprocated intercourse of cattle,' seems to have extended itself to the worthy missionary, who takes the occasion to discuss at some length the question, 'whether gregarious animals have any instinct which induces them to reciprocate the visits of other cattle.' Without committing himself fully upon this subject, he has evidently a strong leaning to the affirmative, and 'of this he is certain, that *the cattle and sheep of others* were as frequently on our landlady's grounds, as hers were *in those of others*.' We beg the reader to remark, not merely the importance of the fact here announced, but the elegance of the language in which it is communicated. '*The cattle and sheep of others* were as frequently on our landlady's grounds, as *hers were in those of others*.' It is clearly not in vain that our author had made himself familiar with the 'euphonic changes of the Sanscrit.' A merely English ear would hardly have hit upon so rich and felicitous a cadence. The case of Mr. Fidler's landlady was not in this respect a singular one. 'This did not happen peculiarly to one person, but was a common occurrence to all *farmers in the country*.' With farmers in town, it would seem that the case was different.

'This reciprocated intercourse of cattle' brings to Mr. Fidler's mind 'an important incident that happened to us on our first commencement of house-keeping,' and which seems to show that the practice in question is not confined to the sheep and cows of Canada, but prevails among some other kinds of animals. 'The lady, who had occupied the same dwelling *antecedent to ourselves*, had left a cat on the premises, which must have been famished during the nine months the house was empty, unless it had found a hospitable welcome among its kindred of the neighborhood. The moment it perceived the house to be *retenanted*, it returned, and such numbers of cats followed it into our kitchen and pantry, that nothing eatable could be left open for a moment without being discovered by them and carried off. It is most probable, that this *congregation of cats* on the premises was nothing more nor less than the *repayment of friendship*.' The 'reciprocated intercourse' among the members of the feline tribe, which is here alluded to by the excellent missionary, has been a subject of frequent remark with other writers, the exchange of civilities among these animals not being always conducted with the perfect discretion and

tranquillity, which probably marked that of the cows and sheep of Upper Canada. Whether the *congregation of cats* on the premises of Mr. and Mrs. Fidler, soon after their first commencement of house-keeping, was, as our author supposes, a '*repayment of friendship*,' or had its origin in a warmer sentiment, is a point which future naturalists may perhaps consider as somewhat doubtful. Before leaving this subject, we would respectfully submit it to the consideration of the Rev. Mr. Fidler, whether, if it should be fully made out that 'gregarious animals have an instinct which induces them to reciprocate the visits of other cattle,' there is not reason to expect that a certain British clergyman, 'for a short time missionary of Thornhill on Yonge street, near York, Upper Canada,' may see, one of these fine mornings, some of the broad honest faces of this portion of the population of Upper Canada looking in at the door of his own parlor. That he is *bête* enough to merit this distinction will hardly, we imagine, be called in question by any one, who has had opportunity to peruse the work before us.

The interchange of civilities among the cattle of Upper Canada, however amiable in itself, and amusing to the ladies of the missionaries, who happen to be *located* there, is, in our author's opinion, on the whole, of evil tendency,—at least, in the case of milch cows. On this subject, he lays down the following proposition. 'When milch cows stray from home, it must be injurious to themselves as well as to their masters.' The necessity of this result is proved in a very satisfactory way. 'Not only do they give less milk, but also their udders, from too long distension, are liable to inflame.' Having thus argumentatively made out his point, our author proceeds to illustrate it by an anecdote, which has to be sure rather a remote bearing on the question, but which is too interesting in itself to be omitted, and which seems to show that the experiences of the father of the Rev. Mr. Fidler, in Natural History, are not less rich and instructive, than those of his son. 'My father,' says the worthy missionary, 'had a cow which could *draw her own milk*. She was no doubt delighted with the flavor of it, for she practised the sucking of herself every day. She grew quite plump, and was a subject of wonder, at the small quantity of milk she yielded, and at her sleek appearance. She was detected one day in the very act, after which a wood collar was suspended round her neck, which prevented her continuing it. She afterwards gave more milk, but de-

creased in fatness. Such cows are best fitted for Canadian pastures, when disposed to take holiday in the woods.'

We trust that whatever opinion may be entertained of the value of Mr. Fidler's work in other respects, the public will be duly sensible of the importance of his contributions to the science of Natural History. Among his other interesting discoveries in this branch of learning, may be mentioned the hitherto unobserved fact, that 'the horses in Canada have a *natural instinct*, which makes them sensible of danger from *girdled pines*.' Such horses would be a very suitable *monture* for the watchmen of Messina, who, as the learned Dogberry informs us, possess by a natural instinct the faculties of reading and writing. It will go hard with Mr. Fidler, if he do not attain the same eminence in physiology with 'the prettiest piece of flesh in Messina;' and we think that, at all events, he runs no risk of not being *written down*, in the way that seems to have been considered most desirable by that celebrated guardian of the night.

Although we are not now speaking particularly of style, we cannot refrain from quoting a passage that occurs in this connexion, and is, perhaps, the most brilliant specimen of eloquence in the volume.

'In addition to the numerous settlements and *clearances*, which serve as *loop-holes of Æolus and Phæbus*, and as gardens for the happy emigrants within, a poet would have found, last year at least, the harsh dissonance of cholera reports, of execrations of plundered Englishmen flocking from the States, and of the heart-rending shrieks of helpless Indians, whom American duplicity had robbed of their heritage, and driven from their homes.'

Loop-holes of Æolus and Phæbus! As the learned Isaac seems to have been in the true Nick Bottom vein when he indited this paragraph, we rather wonder that he did not adopt the orthography as well as the rhetoric of his model.

The raging rocks,
With shivering shocks,
Shall break the locks
Of prison gates,
And *Phibbus'* car
Shall shine from far
And kindle war
On many a star
And make and mar
The foolish fates.

As respects the ‘heart-rending shrieks of helpless Indians, whom American duplicity has driven from their heritage,’ while we disapprove, as strongly as any one can, the conduct of the State of Georgia towards the Cherokees, to which Mr. Fidler appears to allude, we are glad to be able to inform him, that the laws of that State on the subject in question have been declared by the competent authorities in the Government of the United States to be null and void ;—that the Indians are under the protection of that Government ;—that they still dwell in the homes from which he supposes them to have been driven ;—and that, if they have been led by the molestations they have already suffered, or may apprehend in future, to utter any ‘heart-rending shrieks,’ the Canadian poets must have had pretty good ears to have heard them through the aforesaid *loop-holes of Æolus*, at a thousand miles’ distance.

It is high time, however, to get back from these Arcadico-Canadian ‘clearances,’ to *the States*. The ‘reciprocated intercourse of cattle’ was, as we have seen, the only thing which our author’s better half found to amuse her in Canada, and when the charm of novelty had worn off, even this interesting spectacle became tiresome, and Mrs. Fidler began to insist on an immediate return to England. Our author takes care to inform us, that this amiable person had given her consent to the settlement in Canada, only on the express condition that her husband would quit it at a moment’s warning, *if requested*. After the lapse of a period of four months the request was made, and Mr. Fidler, with a laudable fidelity to his engagement, forthwith agreed to it,—made his preparations for departure from Yonge Street, and after casting a longing, lingering look upon the *comforts* of lathed, but not plastered lodgings, a borrowed feather bed, fried pork and bannocks, the reciprocated intercourse of cattle, and the loop-holes of Æolus and Phœbus, made the best of his way back to New York, embarked at once with his family on board of a packet, and after a rapid passage of seventeen days found himself safe and sound at London, having accomplished all the marvellous adventures, and made all the brilliant discoveries described in his book, within the compass of a single twelvemonth.

Such is the outline of the history of the life and adventures of our author, as far as it can be collected from the work before us. The knowledge it affords of his character would be sufficient of itself to give a pretty correct idea of the value of his

Observations, and precludes in a great measure the necessity of a more particular examination. We shall, however, for the further edification and entertainment of our readers, make a few more extracts, accompanied by some occasional commentaries. It may be proper to observe here, that the materials employed in Mr. Fidler's book are disposed in part upon the old classical plan of an epic poem. The author plunges at once *in medias res*, by an account of his arrival and adventures at New York; and it is not till we reach the sixth chapter, that we are presented with some particulars of the occurrences during the voyage, under the novel head of *Retrospective Incidents*. We rather wonder, that Mr. Fidler did not follow up this happy idea by a chapter of *Contemporaneous Reminiscences*.

'I have said,' says Mr. Fidler, in entering upon this episode, 'that I obtained considerable *enlightenment*, (another specimen of the improved English taught in the school of "my much revered preceptor, the Rev. James Tate of Richmond,") upon various points in the manners and opinions of the Americans, particularly from one native of the Union, who happened to be a fellow passenger with me.' After this exordium, Mr. Fidler relates, upon the authority of his fellow passenger, the following anecdote, upon which he makes the annexed *observation*.

'The person this American spoke of, he described as having embarked in business, without being possessed of a dollar; and as trading for a time, according to the custom of his country, upon speculation and credit. A series of bills and promissory engagements, entered into with acquaintances similarly circumstanced, formed the chief means of these commercial speculations. When I expressed surprise at this sort of responsibility, and such a mode of conducting business, the American made answer, "Being in a profession, you are not yourself, Sir, much exposed to the difficulties of the world, and consequently do not know the contrivances which others feel it necessary to adopt. If any person in America should refuse to do a favor of this kind I speak of, for his friends, he would find similar accommodation withheld from himself. The friend of this gentleman was thus circumstanced, and soon failed, through the misfortune of another. During the period of his conducting business, however, he kept a carriage, and lived up to his imagined gains, without providing for the contingencies of an evil day. When all went wrong, his effects were disposed of for the benefit of his creditors; and he was obliged to exchange a comfortable for a wretched state. As

he had married during his prosperity, and a family was the consequence, his greatest exertions were requisite to obtain even the necessaries of life. He was no longer regarded as belonging to the same class of society, but felt himself degraded, and was obliged to perform the most menial offices. While in this condition, his brother, more successful than himself, having made a fortune, died without issue, and bequeathed his property to a public seminary." The American, who told us the story, strongly condemned the conduct of the deceased brother of his friend, calling him an unnatural monster, for having violated, in his opinion, every principle of duty and justice. Hereupon, a discussion ensued, and it was debated with considerable warmth, whether one brother, in such circumstances, had any *natural* claim upon the other.

'I made a remark, which kindled a *burst of indignation*. "In England," I *observed*, "a man unfortunate, from no cause of his own, does not forfeit his place in society. And I should imagine there was some cause for the desertion of your friend by his brother and acquaintances. But, even supposing him perfectly worthy of their continued approbation, he could not, according to Paley, have any natural claim on his brother; collateral branches of a family having no pecuniary claims from consanguinity. The only *grounds* for supposing that one brother ought to render assistance to another, *rests* upon the probability, that if he does not, no other person will." The American, hereupon, lost all government of himself; and, brandishing his knife, for we were then at dinner, asserted that I had introduced this sentiment from motives of priestcraft; and that if neither pay for schoolmasters, nor loaves and fishes for priests, had been augmented by the bequest, I would have condemned it as well as himself.'

In the *observation* which our author here attributes to himself, we hardly know which to admire most, the elegance and correctness of the style, or the beauty of the sentiments. 'A person in distressed circumstances has no natural claim for assistance upon a brother':—'collateral branches of a family,' (brothers and sisters it seems are collateral branches of a family) 'have no pecuniary claims from consanguinity':—'the only *grounds* for supposing that one brother ought to render assistance to another *rests* upon the probability, that if he does not, no other person will.' It would seem that the school of the Rev. Mr. Tate is not less conspicuous for its improvements on the commonly received code of *morals*, than for its happy innovations on the usual forms of language. We would venture to suggest to the Reverend Gentleman, that he would obtain

considerable enlightenment upon the subject of the duties incident to fraternal and other family and social relations, by recurring to an ancient work, entitled the *New Testament*, which is perhaps out of fashion at Richmond, but is still regarded with some respect in the United States.

It is worthy of remark, that the heartless pedant who was capable of inditing the above paragraphs, attempts, in the very next sentence, to be severe upon *Americanisms* in the use of language; and inveighs throughout his work with as much point as he can put into his style, (which to be sure is little enough,) against the *selfishness* of the people of this country, and their steady pursuit of *dollars*, to the exclusion of every higher and more liberal object. The 'burst of indignation,' with which, as he says himself, his unnatural doctrines were received by a large company composed of travellers of all classes, is an honorable testimonial in favor of the state of public feeling among us, and would be more than sufficient of itself to counteract any unfavorable impression that might be produced by his invective, if *such* invective could be supposed to produce abroad or at home any other feeling, but that of contempt for its author.*

But it is really wasting ammunition to pretend to be serious with the Rev. Mr. Fidler. We have already said, that before his expedition to Canada he made a short excursion to this city. He had 'whilst in England, procured letters to two literary gentlemen of Boston, *the* one a Professor in Cambridge University, and the other an author well known in that city.'

* While this article is going through the press, we see in the newspapers some extracts from Col. Hamilton's *Men and Manners in America*, a work to which we shall probably call the attention of our readers in a future number. In the extracts alluded to, the Colonel says that he was led to form an unfavorable opinion of the moral character of the Americans, by hearing, in the bar-room of the public house where he lodged, sentiments which he considered objectionable advanced by Americans and received by the persons present with apparent approbation. Whether the state of moral feeling in the bar-room of a single public house is a fair standard by which to judge of that of a community of thirteen millions, we will not inquire. We will merely remark, that the Colonel gives no facts in support of his general assertion. In the anecdote related in the text by Mr. Fidler we have, at least, one example of a most immoral and unnatural sentiment, advanced in a large mixed company of Americans by a *British Clergyman*, and, according to his own admission, received by them with a *burst of indignation*. In the estimate of characters, individual or national, a single well-authenticated fact is worth a volume of generalities, unsupported by any.

The well known author turns out to be Dr. Lieber, the editor of the *Encyclopædia Americana*, so that, of the two literary gentlemen of *Boston* to whom our traveller was introduced, one proves to be a native of Berlin in Prussia, and the other a Professor at Cambridge. The reader will naturally inquire, whether Mr. Fidler himself does not trace his origin to the Emerald Isle. It is however but just to him to add, that he is for once half right, as the Professor in question, though employed in Cambridge, resides at Boston, the college being only three miles distant from the city. The first visit of the Rev. Mr. Fidler was to the 'well known author,' and is described in the following correct and elegant language.

'I found the gentleman, who was a *litterraire* and an author, well known in Boston, reading some work on Egyptian *Hyro-glyphics*, of which he spoke favorably; but as this was a subject I had never studied, I could not enter into its merits.'

It would seem that the reformers of the Richmond school have taken a wide range through almost all the departments of learning, and we cannot wonder that our author came out with the 'expectation of employing more than ordinary acquirements for the improvement of the Americans.' The use of *litterraire* instead of *littérateur*, and the mode in which the former word and *hieroglyphics* are spelled by our author, are certainly very *extraordinary*, though doubtless very great improvements on the common practice. If we are rightly informed, our author had not only not studied the work on *Hyro-glyphics* here alluded to, which was one of the publications of Champollion the Younger, but had never before heard the name of that distinguished and lamented philologist. It was perhaps hardly to be expected that one, who is himself the author of so many brilliant discoveries in all the branches of learning, should take much pains to keep himself *au fait* of what is doing by others. The account of the interview with the 'well known author,' proceeds as follows.

'At last, after many desultory observations on numerous topics, as rapid and evanescent as *mental* and *lingual* *validity* could render them, we alighted on a subject of mutual interest, frequently discussed by persons I met with at New York. I had always observed, that native Americans do not enter into such debates with *half the* warmth and bitterness as European refugees. The Americans appear to employ dependent strangers on the out-works of their republic to sound the political sentiments and principles of every approaching emigrant, and to convey to the

democratic sensorium a timely and accurate impression, before they welcome him into the capital of their patronage and support.'

The faculties of *mental* and *lingual* *validity*, which the Rev. Mr. Fidler brought into use upon this occasion, are of course among the new discoveries of the Richmond school. It is deeply to be regretted, that our author's early return should have deprived this community of the benefit of these 'more than ordinary' improvements in intellectual philosophy. The topic discussed appears to have been the same which forms the general subject of our author's work, viz. Professions, Literature, Manners, and Emigration in the United States. We extract Mr. Fidler's concluding observations.

"'To all this," I replied, "that had I seen him on my first arrival in the States, I should have cordially agreed in his views and observations. I had harbored, whilst in England, bitter and *aggravated sentiments* against the aristocracy; and had believed, that the country would be better without that privileged body. This opinion I might always have indulged, had I always lived in England; but America is an infallible corrector of such *erroneous judgment*, in every man of intelligence and capable of observation. I have never met with any person from Great Britain worthy to be called respectable, whose opinions, however radical before, did not become completely altered. You cannot, when in England," I added, "have obtained satisfactory information on these points; otherwise your mind must be singularly formed. *A third rate talent in professions there, is certainly equal to the highest in the States.* I am greatly mistaken, if any first rate professional man exists in all America. There are certainly men of eminence; but they are eminent only among their own countrymen, and would not obtain a high rank in England. And although it is true, that many lucrative and important situations are held by noblemen, yet *all such places are not exclusively so.* England can enumerate more persons raised from a low to a high station, than any other country. In short, there is hardly any village in England, which does not possess residents of greater learning, and professional talent, than *is* to be found in *almost any large town* in the United States. Besides, that which is a low reward for literature in England, is a high reward in America. No man there, who possesses more than ordinary learning, can remain long unnoticed. His reward often depends upon himself. The nobility are bountiful rewarders of merit, when it makes itself conspicuous."'

As it seems from these observations, that 'no man who pos-
VOL. XXXVII.—NO. 81. 37

sesses more than ordinary learning can remain long unnoticed in England,' and as our author candidly tells us himself, that he possesses 'more than ordinary acquirements,' in addition to the faculties of *mental* and *lingual validity*, which, though we cannot pretend to conjecture what they are, must, we presume, be something of a very extraordinary character,—we rather wonder why, as he also tells us himself, 'he has not obtained and is not likely to obtain preferment,' and even 'found very little to encourage his ambition in the laborious profession of a teacher.' We trust that Mr. Fidler will furnish a satisfactory solution of this somewhat difficult problem, in the next edition of his work. After the specimen that he has given us himself of the literary taste and talent of a British clergyman of 'more than ordinary acquirements,' it would be idle to question the correctness of his opinion, that 'a third rate talent in *professions* in England is equal to the highest in the States.'

The interview with Dr. Lieber seems to have terminated rather unsatisfactorily, which is quite remarkable, considering the very guarded, discreet and good-tempered manner, in which our author carried on his share of the dialogue. 'I left this German author,' he remarks, 'rather abruptly, some offence being apparent from the difference of our views and the tendency of our arguments, and went to deliver another letter of introduction I had, to one of the Professors of Cambridge University.' At the house of the Professor, he was made acquainted with Mr. John Pickering, who seems to have treated him with attention, and will doubtless be much gratified with the manner in which he is shown up in the *Observations*. Mr. Pickering introduced our author to 'a congregational minister, Dr. J. whom he represented as the best Orientalist in Boston.' Our readers will be amused with Mr. Fidler's account of his conversation with that gentleman, at two successive interviews.

'Dr. J., after expressing the satisfaction it afforded him to meet with a person, with whom he could converse on Oriental learning, withdrew into his study, and returned with an armful of Persian, Sanscrit, Arabic, and Hindoostanee books.

'No sooner had I examined these works, than I began to think that I had already made a premature estimate of American literature, and that what I had frequently heard in New-York must be true. When, on my first arrival in the States, I mentioned to several scholars my surprise at the extremely low state of learning and the professions, I was always answered thus: "New-York is not a literary, but a commercial city. If you are desir-

ous of seeing the lions of American literature, go to Boston." As I had long been engaged in such studies, and had lately arrived from London, the hot-bed of languages, arts, and sciences, I thought I could have little to apprehend from any Orientalist in the United States : I therefore summoned up a fitting self confidence, expecting, with my new friend, a trial of skill. "Do you Dr. J., understand these authors?" I asked. "I have some knowledge of them," he replied, "but not very extensive." He then took a German selection of Sanscrit passages from various authors, the first of which was the opening passage of the Laws of Menu. This he requested me to read, which I did, and when I paused, and perceived that he made no inquiries, nor added any observations, I began to suspect that he did not understand the language. I therefore requested him to tell me, if he knew the letters. His answer amused me ; "I have written them over several times ; but the truth is that they are so confoundedly difficult, that I could never remember them. I cannot therefore read any of the words, nor have I ever before heard them read ; but have seen some accounts respecting the language, that it is a very engaging study."

'To this latter statement I of course agreed ; adding, that the Sanscrit is certainly the most perfect and regular in its grammatical forms, of all languages with which I am acquainted ; and its euphonic transformations the most accurately systematic. Moreover, it is now thought by the best judges to be the origin of the Greek language. Many roots, and prepositions, and the numbers and voices, are nearly the same in both. Also *every euphonic change* in Greek, and in *every other language*, can be referred to the principles of Sanscrit. After having held a short conversation with Dr. J., and discovered that his Oriental knowledge might be compressed into a nut-shell, he informed me, that some duties he had to perform required his absence, and requested I would call again on the following day. I promised to repeat my visit at the time he mentioned, and we took forthwith our departure.

'As we were returning from this *characteristic farce*, Mr. P. informed me, that he had once resided in London, as secretary to the American Minister, and had seen the dignity and greatness which learning in England frequently obtains. "It is the prospect of rewards," added he, "which stimulates and encourages. In America, there is no inducement for enthusiastic perseverance in literature. Indeed we have no literature in this country." To this I could not help adding, "A well educated Englishman will always make the same discovery, after the residence of a day. It is impossible to be concealed or disguised."

'On the day following, I paid a second visit to Dr. J., and read over to him some Persian and Hindoostanee. I then requested him to allow me the pleasure of hearing his pronunciation of some Persian sentences; but he begged I would dispense with his performance of it; and then added, "This is the second time in my life, in which I have heard a Persian word pronounced. A young gentleman, who had been in India, once before indulged me in a similar manner with yourself; but it is several years ago, and I have no recollection of the sounds." The books he possessed must be considered as rarities in America, and as inexplicable puzzles even to himself. They must be, however, amusing companions to an American Orientalist. Had I not been well able to penetrate into the den of the Bostonian lions, and to estimate its profundity and extent, I might have quitted that celebrated place, with the erroneous impression, that it contains at least one extraordinary linguist. But I must confess, that it appeared not a little amusing, that every thing of literature in the States, with which one grapples, dwindles into mere pretence, and vanishes into air. I observed, when in the Cambridge library, a copy of Dr. *Wilkin's* Sanscrit Grammar, and found its pages free from the finger marks of transatlantic students. May it long continue so, and be a true index of university intelligence, where it has been so carefully preserved. Whilst literary honors and emoluments are so sparingly dispensed, there is no fear of its derangement or disfigurement.'

After the specimens which our readers have already had of Mr. Fidler's literary qualifications, they will probably consider his pretension to *grapple* with the literature of *the States*, and pass sentence *ex cathedra* upon its amount and value, at least as *farcical*, as any thing that occurred at his interviews with Dr. Jenks. Of the extent of that gentleman's Oriental learning, we are not informed. We shall presently see that Mr. Fidler, during his stay in Boston, fell into company with another gentleman, well known to the public both abroad and at home by his writings as an Oriental scholar, and notwithstanding his 'fitting self-confidence,' that he had little to apprehend from a trial of skill with any Orientalist in the United States, either shrunk from *grappling* with him, or has prudently refrained from informing the world of the results of the contest. Whether our author really possesses the profound knowledge of the Oriental languages and literature to which he lays claim, is, in our opinion, exceedingly doubtful. If his acquirements in this line were as extraordinary as he modestly represents them, he would not have met with so lamentable a failure at home.

The few remarks, which he makes upon the subject, are far from removing the impression created by the ill success of his school in England. He tells us, for example, in the above extract, that 'the Sanscrit is now thought by the best judges to be the origin of the Greek language.' We hardly need to say that it is not 'thought by the best judges,' but known to all who are moderately well informed upon the common topics of general philology, that the Sanscrit is the basis not only of the Greek, but of the Latin, and all the Teutonic and Celtic tongues. Again:—'Every *euphonic change* in Greek and in every other language may be referred to the principles of the Sanscrit.' In whatever sense the phrase *euphonic changes* may be here taken, which the reverend gentleman appears to employ in a manner peculiar to himself, the remark is equally absurd, and betrays either gross ignorance, or the silliest spirit of wanton exaggeration. Mr. Pickering, for example, could have told him a very different story about the aboriginal languages of this continent. We suppose the truth to be, that our author knows about enough Sanscrit and Arabic, to explain to students the grammar and vocabulary. If questioned upon any point of learning beyond this, we suspect that he would find himself as much at a loss, as he did when called upon to converse with Dr. Lieber upon the recent discoveries in Egyptian Hieroglyphics.

Our readers will perceive, that Mr. Pickering is here represented as saying, that there is no literature in this country. Mr. Pickering is himself a literary man of distinction, known as such to the world by several works of acknowledged value, prudent and judicious in his statements, and quite incapable of saying any thing so utterly absurd. He probably made some observation upon the subject, in the tone of modesty with which men of education and refinement habitually express themselves, upon points involving in any way their own personal pretensions. The reply of Mr. Fidler must have satisfied him, that he was throwing his pearls in a direction expressly prohibited in Scripture. Mr. Pickering, like all other well-informed persons, knows perfectly well, that there is in the United States more literature, in the proper sense of the term, that is, more investigation and discussion in print of all subjects involving the great existing interests of society, such as Government, Religion, Education, Public and Private Economy, and the various elegant and useful arts of life, than, taking the whole together, there is in any other country. That some of the merely

ornamental and curious branches of learning are more assiduously cultivated and carried to higher perfection elsewhere, than they are with us, is probably true: but where this is the case, the practical part of literature is proportionately at a lower ebb, and if we cannot have both at once, the shirt without the ruffle seems to be at least as important, as the ruffle without the shirt.

The most amusing scene in our author's adventures at Boston occurred at the house of Mr. Pickering himself, where Mr. Fidler was invited the night before he left town.

'On the evening previous to my leaving Boston, Mr. P. invited me to take tea at his house. There were four literary gentlemen invited to meet me, but they were not all present at tea. Some of them came late in the evening. Dr. J. and the German gentleman I have already mentioned, were two, and besides a student and a young gentleman who had spent some time at the Levant, Mr. H.'

This 'young gentleman who had spent some time at the Levant' was Mr. Hodgson, the person alluded to above as an Oriental scholar of distinction. He had for some years preceding been attached to the Consulate at Algiers, which, in the geography of Mr. Fidler, is probably situated in the Levant; and at the period in question was about embarking at Boston for Constantinople, where he is now employed as Interpreting Secretary to the Legation. Mr. H. is known to the public as a linguist and Orientalist by his memoirs on the Berber language in the Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, and by his translation from the Arabic of the Travels of Hadgee Ebn-ed-Din El Eghwaatee in the interior of Africa, which was published at London in 1830 by the Oriental Translation Society.* It is remarkable that with this translation looking him in the face, as one of the latest publications in his own branch of learning previously to his departure from London, Mr. Fidler has the hardihood to affirm, that there is not a person in the United States, who can read Arabic.† In charity to his moral qualities, we are bound to

* See a notice of these works in the Review, Vol. XXXV. p. 54.

† The Oriental languages and literature are taught as a regular branch of study in our principal literary institutions. The Professorship at Cambridge, the best-endowed chair of the kind in the country, was vacant at the time when Mr. Fidler visited Boston; and had he possessed the requisite qualifications, might probably have been offered him. We happen to know that a gentleman, connected with the gov-

suppose that our author takes so little interest in Oriental learning, as not to be acquainted with the publications respecting it, that are made under his own eye. Anxious, however, as he professes to have been, for a trial of skill with an

ernment of the college, called upon him for the purpose of learning something about his pretensions and character, and with the intention of recommending him as a candidate for the vacant place, had he appeared to be a suitable person. Mr. Fidler, after a visit of about a week, had left Boston, and the account given of him by the few persons who saw him was not such, as to render it expedient to take any further steps in the business.

As to the success with which the Oriental languages and literature are cultivated in this country, we believe we hazard nothing in saying, that the standard in this branch of learning is now, at least as high as in England. We are sustained in this opinion by the authority of some of the most competent judges in England, as appears from the following letters, which were published in the *Biblical Repository* for October, 1831. We hardly need to say, that no name in England carries with it higher authority in Oriental learning than that of Professor Lee, who is really, what Mr. Fidler erroneously supposes himself to be, a person of 'more than ordinary acquirements.'

Extract from a letter addressed to the Editor of the Biblical Repository, by the Rev. Samuel Lee, Professor of Arabic and Hebrew in the University of Cambridge, England, under date of London, June 5, 1831.

'My dear Sir,

'I am very much obliged to you for your kind letter of June 20, which came duly to hand, and for the first number of your *Biblical Repository*. It will be a great satisfaction to me to open a correspondence with you, and to contribute all the encouragement, advice, &c. I can, to your praiseworthy undertaking. It delights me and all my Cambridge friends to find, that *our American neighbors are really outstripping us in the cause of Biblical literature*. May He, whose cause you are laboring to promote, strengthen your hands a hundred fold! I am quite sure you will find no unholy rivalry here; although I do hope you will find us endeavoring to keep up the race, as well as the contention necessary to secure that crown, which fadeth not away. I have seen a copy of the new edition of Professor Stuart's Hebrew grammar, and the industry of its author is new matter for my admiration of him.'

Extract from a letter addressed to Professor Stuart, of the Andover Theological Institution, by the Rev. D. Henderson, Professor of Theology in Highbury College near London, under date of Feb. 22, 1831.

'My dear Sir,

'I cannot proceed farther, without tendering to you my best thanks for the copy of the new edition of your Hebrew Grammar. I was already well acquainted with it, and quite agree with you as to the importance of the more condensed form in which it appears. *Even as it is, it is, however, I am sorry to say, too formidable for most of my countrymen*, who have got so spoiled by the habit of learning the language without points, or with them so superficially, that I fear few copies will be in demand.'

American Orientalist, one would think that this interview with Mr. Hodgson would have been eagerly embraced for this purpose; but whether he was wholly unacquainted with that gentleman's reputation and writings, and considered him, as he describes him, as merely 'a young man who had spent some time at the Levant,' too obscure to occupy for a moment the attention of a British clergyman of 'more than ordinary acquirements,' or whether the results of the conversation,—if any took place,—were not such as to awaken agreeable recollections of it in our author's mind, certain it is, that he makes no other allusion to Mr. H. than is contained in the above passage. We have been given to understand, on sufficient authority, that Mr. Fidler displayed on this occasion, not merely the general want of information and grossness of manner which distinguished him every where, but the most lament-

We take this occasion to recommend to our readers the *Biblical Repository*, as one of the most valuable periodical works, in the department of learning to which it is devoted, that appear in the country. The editor, Professor Robinson of the Andover Theological Institution, and his able coadjutors, particularly Professor Stuart, are entitled to the highest credit for the zeal, learning, ability and liberality with which they conduct this work. Though published at an institution commonly regarded as the head-quarters of orthodoxy, it has nothing sectarian about it, and does not exclude from its pages the views even of the ultra-liberal German rationalists. We noticed, for example, in the last number, a translation from the German of De Wette's Introduction to the Psalms. The same number contains an excellent article by Dr. Reynolds of this city, upon the best means of preventing and remedying diseases of the eyes. We sincerely regret that the multifarious and unwearied labors of Professor Robinson have seriously impaired his health, but trust that the visit to Europe, on which he is now absent, will restore it, while it furnishes him with fresh materials for use on his return.

As to the state of Greek literature in this country, of which Mr. Fidler also expresses a very poor opinion, we need only refer him to the beautiful Homer, with Flaxman's Illustrations, and the translation from the German of Buttman's larger Greek grammar, which have been published here this summer, the former by Professor Felton of Cambridge, and the latter by the indefatigable Professor Robinson of Andover. We know of no publications of equal value, in this branch of learning, that have appeared during the present year in England. The translation of Buttman will no doubt be *borrowed* in England, as happened in the case of Mr. Everett's translation of the smaller grammar of the same author. We hope, for the honor of the mother country, that the English publisher will not, in this instance, as in the other, in that of Mrs. Child's *Mother's Book*, and several cases of a similar kind, attempt to exalt his own merit by false statements in regard to the form in which the work republished appeared in America.

able ignorance of the ordinary learning of his own peculiar branch of philology. Instead of directing his conversation to Mr. Hodgson, our author seems to have fastened at once upon the young student.

‘The student, a youth of sixteen, was introduced as a prodigy of learning, and an Arabic scholar. Mr. P.’s son had been employed two years in tuition, between his leaving the university, and engaging in the profession of the law. This youth had been his pupil, and was reported to be an extraordinary specimen of genius. Sir William Jones’ Persian Grammar was produced, and I desired him to pronounce a few of the first words of the story of the Bulbul. He commenced spelling the first word, as a child does his a-b ab’s. “Can you not read the words,” inquired I, “without mentioning the letters?” To which he answered, that he knew most of the letters, but could not pronounce the words. I inquired how long he had applied himself to Arabic, to which he answered, two years. I then explained to him the discipline of our schools in England, which is generally so strict as to preclude the possibility of a student’s time being so long occupied, in acquiring the characters of a language. “You must many times,” continued I, “have endured the infliction of chastisement, for such unprecedented neglect and idleness, had you been educated in England.” I perceived that *discipline* and *chastisement* sounded harsh upon his ears, and *he retired from the party at an early hour.*’

It appears from this passage, that in order to ascertain what progress had been made by a young man, who had been studying Arabic two years, Mr. Fidler examined him in Persian. Had he been studying Sanscrit, the worthy divine would probably have set him to reading Chinese. This is really too good. The power of reading and talking one language, after studying another, is doubtless one of the results of the newly discovered faculties of *mental* and *lingual* *validity*; but Mr. Fidler should have recollected, that the organs corresponding with these faculties are not yet developed in the American cranium, and have taken compassion upon our imperfect state of civilization. Finding that the student could not stand this test, Mr. F., it seems, informed him in substance, that if he were in England, he would be soundly flogged for his negligence. ‘You must many times,’ continued I, ‘have endured the infliction of chastisement for such unprecedented neglect and idleness, had you been educated in England.’ Truly a most agreeable and civil speech for one gentleman to address to another, whom

he happens to meet in the ordinary intercourse of society ! Strange as it may seem, the student does not appear to have been particularly delighted with it. ‘I perceived that *discipline* and *chastisement* sounded harsh upon his ears, and he retired from the party at an early hour.’ The poor student probably thought that a person, who was capable of saying such a thing, would be likely enough to follow up the word by the action ; and that the best course he could take to prevent an attack upon his *rear*, as Mrs. Trollope elegantly has it, would be to effect an immediate retreat from the field. Having thus cleared the room of the student, Mr. Fidler next applied his *locomotive* faculties to the ‘well-known German author,’ who was also of the party.

‘The German author, who had before vented his indignation against the aristocracy of England, now resumed the same subject ; and repeated many accusations entirely unfounded, and which nothing but prejudice could dictate. This he did, to demonstrate his attachment to a republican form of government, and to expose my political views. He dwelt particularly on the pride and immorality of our nobles. I ventured to dispute his statements and inferences, thus unnecessarily obtruded and reiterated ; and witnessed also his *hasty and untimely exit*.’

The following anecdote, which is extracted from another part of the work, shows that our author’s conversation was of a not less *moving* character on other occasions, than it was at Mr. Pickering’s house.

‘I never was so much at a loss how to conduct myself properly, as at an American table. Sometimes a few observations are made, but they always end abruptly, unless rendered palatable by flattery. A physician of some eminence boarded at the same house, and ate at the same table with ourselves ; he one day asserted, that literature and scholars in America were infinitely raised above those of Europe, and of England in particular. I mentioned to him my experience in America, and what I had noticed at Boston. He grew rather warm at my narrations and remarks, and said, “You must admit, at the least, that American physicians are above those of England, in sound knowledge, and in physic ?” “I could hardly conceive,” I replied, “that, in a country so recently peopled, and so sparing in pecuniary and honorary recompense to professional talent, any first-rate physicians could be found. Were American institutions on so excellent a plan, as to produce attainments of sufficient

brilliancy to shine in England, their possessors would never be satisfied with the state of things in their own country, but would emigrate to climates more congenial to their acquired perceptions, where their talents might be appreciated and rewarded." "You have slandered our country," he indignantly exclaimed, "and could never gain a comfortable living in it." "Some of your own clergy and professors were of a different opinion," said I, "and encouraged me to open a school, at respectable terms. I have contented myself with making inquiries respecting professions in general, and my own in particular, and have discovered that America has nothing to confer which could allure my stay." *He shortly after left the table*, and for three days seated himself at another place, where he could exchange neither words nor looks.

To return, however, to the party at Mr. Pickering's:—the company was now reduced to Dr. J. and Mr. Hodgson; and Mr. Pickering, if he expected to take much comfort in their society, must have been by this time pretty well prepared to return the ingredients of the poisoned chalice to our author's own lips, by showing him the way to the door. Whether this was in fact done, we are not informed, but it would seem that Mr. Fidler, on reviewing the next day the transactions of the evening, felt that he had an account of some sort to settle with Mr. Pickering, and addressed him the following letter.

'Your friend, Dr. L., appears to have imbibed either in England or elsewhere, notions of our aristocracy, which do himself no credit, and them no harm. They are not likely to be injured by illiberal observations made in a sweeping manner against their order, by persons who could never have an opportunity of knowing their real character. As to their being the proudest aristocracy in Europe, it is true; and it is equally true that the very shop-keepers of respectability in London are, in talents, education, and wealth, higher, generally speaking, than the aristocracy of any other nation. England, as a nation, is among nations, what her aristocracy is among the aristocracies of the earth; she stands supreme, and will do so, for generations yet unborn, unless she persists in her present infatuation, forgetful of her high state, and of the Being who conferred it.'

'I perceive, that a foreigner, to gain the favor of the American public, must vilify his own nation, and condemn all hereditary rule. The *native Americans* sit wrapped up in self-complacency, and inhale the grateful fragrance of slavish adulation.

The swindler, the profligate, the idle, the disaffected,—they who have deprived others of their property, or who have squandered their own, find that the price of American patronage is cheaply paid: they flatter and falsify. A person of higher principles, who is able by his talents and industry to maintain himself in Europe, will never stoop to this sort of baseness.”

Considered as a parting letter to a native American, who had spontaneously and without Mr. Fidler's having the slightest claim of any kind upon him, shown that gentleman great courtesy, it must be owned that this is a most judicious and civil production. It appears, that our author had imbibed in England the same opinion of the aristocracy which he attributes to Dr. Lieber, having been, as he says himself, a ‘down-right radical,’ and having changed his views only in consequence of his ill success in this country. As Dr. Lieber has, we understand, succeeded very well here, he has not of course had the same motive for reforming his political creed, which prevailed with our author, and we cannot consider it as fair or reasonable in the latter to be angry with him for not having done so. The intimation, that because Dr. Lieber has succeeded where Mr. Fidler did not, the former must necessarily be a ‘profligate, idle, disaffected swindler, who has deprived other people of their property, or squandered his own,’ and the latter ‘a person of higher principles, who is able by his talents and industry to maintain himself in Europe, and would not stoop to this kind of baseness,’ is as incorrect as it is unhandsome. Mr. Fidler himself admits, that he was not able to maintain himself at home; and if he will reflect a little, he cannot but be sensible that a person of talent, address and an amiable and conciliatory deportment, without practising any unworthy arts, may very well succeed under circumstances, in which another of inferior accomplishments and repulsive manners would entirely fail. The fact, that Mr. Fidler's presence regularly cleared the room where he was of all other company, ought to have given him *considerable enlightenment* upon the causes that prevented his success. He should have applied to his own case, *mutatis mutandis*, his remark upon the Americans, and ‘when he found that no really respectable and well informed person would continue in his company longer than his business or the purposes of travelling required, should have concluded that something not entirely attractive pervaded his personal character.’

His remark, that ‘the very shopkeepers of respectability in London are, in talents, education and *wealth* higher, generally speaking, than the aristocracy of any other nation,’ is a good specimen of nationality run mad; but we cannot find it in our hearts to be very severe upon our author for it, when we recollect that no less a personage than Lord Chancellor Eldon, if correctly reported in the newspapers, declared, in a speech before the House of Peers, that ‘he felt to the bottom of his heart, that the meanest subject of the king of Great Britain was better than the highest of any other sovereign on the globe.’ The Infantados, Esterhazys, Chartoriskis, and Sheremetieffs of the continent would, however, be rather surprised to learn, that they are outdone even in *wealth*, (to say nothing of *education* and *talents*,) by the respectable shop-keepers of Holborn and the Strand. Our author is not aware that in civilized countries, where there is no middling class, and where the mass of the people are in a degraded condition, the aristocracy must necessarily possess a proportionally greater share of wealth and power than they possibly can, where political advantages are more equally distributed. Under such circumstances, they are also, in general, as much more accomplished and energetic, as they are more powerful and wealthy than the same classes in a mixed government, where experience shows that they commonly sink into sloth, and give up all care even of their own property. We may say, perhaps, without fear of contradiction, that the Russian nobles of the present day are the most accomplished, high-minded and effective, as well as the most powerful and wealthy aristocracy in Europe. We extract, in illustration of these remarks, and by way of relief to Mr. Fidler’s *Jérémiades*, the account given by a recent writer of good authority, of his reception at the residence of Count Potocki at Toulchin in Poland. In the course of our experiences among the shop-keepers of London, we have met with no one that kept an establishment of the same extent. The narrative is taken from a work entitled the Journal of a Nobleman at the Congress of Vienna.

‘The family mansion of the Potockis at Toulchin, commonly called the palace of Toulchin, is one of the most splendid edifices in Europe. It is built in the most elegant style of modern architecture, and is furnished in a manner suitable to its external magnificence. Over its portico is written, in large gold letters, the following sentiment, in the Polish language :

May it ever be the abode of virtue and freedom !

The wish therein expressed is no doubt praiseworthy ; but its application would have been more suitable to the house of Socrates, than to a palace in Poland.

‘ Having been formerly known to the Countess Potocki at St. Petersburg, where she had given me a pressing invitation to visit her at Toulchin, I hastened, on my arrival there, to pay my respects to her. My companion was a still older acquaintance of hers than myself, and we proceeded together to the palace. We met with the most friendly reception from the countess, who rebuked us for not having gone straight to her house, to take up our abode there during the stay we might feel disposed to make in Toulchin. She gave orders immediately for our carriages, servants, and baggage to be brought from the place at which we had left them, not suffering us even to go and fetch them ourselves.

‘ As the Countess Potocki made this her chief place of residence, Toulchin might have been called the El Dorado of Poland. The time we spent there, though only limited to a few weeks, forms one of the most agreeable periods of my existence. Besides the members of the family, consisting of the countess, her eight sons and daughters, and her daughter-in-law, the young and amiable Countess de Witt, a great number of ladies were attached to the household, either as relatives, or *dames de compagnie*. There were also two foreigners of considerable merit, retained as instructors to the sons of the countess ; one was the Abbé de Chalenton, a French emigrant priest, who had been preceptor to the Counts Armand and Jules de Polignac ; the other was Mr. Allan, the English historical painter, who was commissioned by the countess to execute for her a variety of pictures destined for the gallery of the palace, besides teaching the art of drawing to her children. A suite of apartments and two attendants were assigned to each guest and each inmate, and it was the established rule that every one should consider himself at home, asking for all he wanted, keeping any hours most convenient to him, disposing of his time as he pleased, and not even appearing at the public dinner table, if it best suited him to dine in his own apartments. This, however, was only done in cases of indisposition, and the countess’s dinner table was always attended by all the family and visitors. Indeed the charms of conversation were never more attractive, than during the sumptuous banquets which constituted the ordinary fare at the palace of Toulchin, and no one would willingly have foregone their enjoyment. The interval between coffee and tea was usually spent in walking in the extensive gardens, or riding out either in open carriages or on horseback. After tea, music, cards, and con-

versation went on among the senior portion of the society, and *des petits jeux* among the juniors, who not unfrequently tempted even the gravest among us to join them in their juvenile sports. I recollect one evening the game of blindman's buff becoming so universal, that, among the numerous persons present, none but the countess had abstained from taking an active part.

'One of the most remarkable features of a protracted residence in the palace of Toulchin, was the frequent and almost uninterrupted appearance there of persons of eminence and celebrity in Russia and in Poland, as well as of travellers of distinction from various parts of the world. None came within thirty or forty wersts of Toulchin, without deviating from their regular course in order to pay their personal respects to the countess; and parties of her friends and acquaintance came all the way from St. Petersburg, Moscow, Warsaw, and other distant parts, for the express purpose of visiting her. There was therefore a constant succession of arrivals and departures, which, far from giving that annoyance of which one would suppose so much bustle to be productive, appeared to form a source of incessant gratification to the amiable hostess. With her, in fact, it was as if she resided in one of the capitals of the empire. Her acquaintances were almost as frequently under her roof, as if they only resided a street or two from her residence. Here, however, she was enabled to receive them without that restraint, more or less imposed by the regulations of social intercourse in great capitals, and their visits thereby became far more agreeable.

'To convey an idea of the manner in which time was disposed of in the palace of Toulchin, I will give some account of the manner I spent mine, during the whole month of July that I participated in its friendly hospitalities. I got up between seven and eight in the morning, and proceeded to bathe, sometimes in an artificial river which has been made to run through the garden, and at other times in one of the Turkish baths, of which several are always ready for immediate use. I breakfasted at ten in my own *salon*, read, wrote, or rode out between that time and one o'clock, at which hour I always proceeded to the countess's private sitting room, to pay my respects to her. After remaining with her about an hour, passed in the most agreeable conversation, I proceeded to the apartments of others, either inmates or visitors like myself, with whom I generally stayed till three, when the dinner bell summoned us all to the banqueting hall, where a table with fifty covers was always prepared. This dining room was laid out in a manner which answered the purpose of a museum of works of sculpture, and a conservatory of odoriferous plants indigenous to almost every part of the globe.

The dinner generally lasted an hour and a half. On getting up from table, we proceeded to an extensive *orangerie*, to which three glass folding doors opened, where coffee and ices were served. Here the arrangements for the evening promenade were discussed and settled, after which the ladies retired to their chambers to prepare themselves for going out, leaving the gentlemen to spend the interval in conversation or chess playing. At six, a sufficient number of open carriages and saddle horses were ready, and we rode out till half past seven. At eight we all took tea in one of the suite of drawing-rooms, where we remained till eleven, at which hour supper was announced. Most of the company retired at half past twelve, and at one in the morning I went to bed.'

It is but just to our author to say, that in one or two instances, the cloud of discontent and ill-humor, which commonly enveloped him, cleared away, and permitted him to witness, with some satisfaction, what was going on around him. On these occasions, his mode of expressing his approbation, and the causes which he assigns for it are even more curious, than the grave dissertations of his darker hours. We have, in fact, in the course of our reading, met with nothing to be compared with the gaiety of the Rev. Isaac Fidler, excepting, perhaps, the simple joy of his prototype, the worthy Dominie, on discovering himself to be, by some mysterious intervention of Providence, arrayed in a new suit of apparel. The reader has already had a specimen of our author's sportive mood, in his remarks upon the 'reciprocated intercourse of cattle' in Canada, and will find another in the following account of the manner of observing the return of New Year's day at New York, on which occasion the natives, it seems, practise the 'singular custom' of exchanging visits. Mr. Fidler is apparently not aware, that this practice also prevails in every other part of the United States, and in all parts of every other country on the globe, from China to Peru.

'There is a singular custom, which prevails in New-York, but, I am informed, in no other part of the Union : on New-year's Day, all gentlemen call on their female friends, to renew or perpetuate their friendship. A lawyer, with whom I had contracted an intimacy, introduced me on that day to about thirty ladies. The rounds of calls we made, occupied our time from nine in the morning till seven at night. In almost every house we entered, we found other gentlemen on the same errand. It would be regarded as unpardonably rude in any lady, to treat with indiffer-

ence a gentleman, who had honored her with his call. This is often the commencement of new acquaintances, or the reconciliation of former ones which were broken off, or discontinued. All the ladies we called on, as is universally the case, had prepared cakes, sweetmeats, wines, cordials, &c., in great profusion, in readiness to exhilarate and regale their visitors. They were themselves, in general, very elegantly decked out and beautified. All appearance of mercenary business was wholly laid aside, and calculating penury had its annual slumber. Many gentlemen jaunted about in sleighs, a kind of carriage which slides upon the snow, to pay their devotions to the fair recluses; ladies on this day not being permitted, from punctilios of etiquette, to stray from home. The scene to me was as gratifying as it was new. All was animation, cheerfulness, and friendly feeling. The Americans seem, on this occasion, to have light hearts and buoyant spirits, and fulfil as much as any nation the command, "Take no thought for the morrow." Thus some traits in their character are extremely pleasing to a foreigner. This was the only occasion, on which I saw the bright side of American sociability. In the midst of this joyous and festive gaiety, my fancy whispered, that the Americans are really a pleasant people. But the day, with all its pleasures, passed away, and I was forced to moderate my flattering conclusions!

We must now take our leave of the Rev. Isaac Fidler and his Observations, to which our readers will probably think that we have already devoted more attention than they deserve. We have noticed his book, because we consider it as a curiosity in its way,—a sort of *reductio ad absurdum* of the strain of thought and feeling in which it is written. It is quite singular, that this should have been furnished by a traveller, whose education and profession would have justified us in expecting from him, with more confidence than from almost any of his predecessors, not only the 'more than ordinary acquirements' which he makes no scruple of formally claiming, but the manners and feelings of a gentleman.

It would of course be a waste of time and labor to undertake to answer seriously any charges against the national character, contained in such a work as the one before us. There is, however, one view of the subject, which we think must suggest itself very forcibly to the mind of any person of the slightest reflection, and on which we propose, in conclusion, to say a few words. We allude to the complete opposition between the representations given in the work before us, and in most others

of the same class, of the English and American characters, which, from the nature of the case, must be, as they in fact are, substantially the same. The worthies who indite these books, while in the act of pouring out the bitter vials of their wrath upon the Americans, are constantly professing the highest admiration, respect, esteem and love for 'England and the English.' Mr. Fidler, for example, as we have already seen, represents England as 'standing supreme among the nations.' 'Her very shopkeepers are higher in talents, education and wealth, than the aristocracy of any other nation.' 'A third rate talent in (the) professions, (in England) is certainly equal to the highest in *the States*.' Such is the uniform burden of the song, and in one of the closing chapters, we find the whole summed up in the following magnificent eulogium on the English character.

'This great reformation in the moral world has, under Providence, been principally achieved by the English nation, and cannot but be contemplated, by every traveller possessing British feelings, with peculiar interest and pleasure. He will find, in every place he visits, multitudes of fellow-countrymen who have emigrated thither, and introduced with themselves a portion of the arts and sciences of their paternal land. He will find them, wherever they *locate*, converting the barren wilderness and the almost impervious forests, into smiling and fertile regions, producing supplies for their own necessities, and enabling them to contribute, by the channels thus opened to trade and commerce, to the employment, and consequently to the comfort and happiness of tens of thousands.

'The English, by their enterprise and skill, and by unwearied perseverance, impart energy and life to those around them, and serve as an example to the whole world of what, under Providence, may be accomplished by a nation influenced in an eminent degree by the principles of honor, integrity, and virtue, and giving expression to those principles by unparalleled exertions, and widening the sphere of their utility. Wherever they advance, the rigors of despotism cease, the savage loses the ferocity of his nature, and adopts the habits of civilized man. They have discovered that the pure religion of the Gospel is too spiritual to be comprehended by men whose minds are swayed by ignorance and superstition, and have founded seminaries of instruction in all countries over which their empire is extended. In short, they appear to have been placed as lights in the world, as a centre from which the whole earth might be irradiated, and have been chiefly instrumental in producing a moral and religious

reformation in pagan countries. Those, in every country, who speak their language, and have access to their literature, imbibe, more extensively than others, the spirit of civil and religious freedom, and are distinguished in dignity of sentiment and action above the rest of mankind. The nearer any nation approaches to the laws, the constitution, and the customs of England, the nearer it approaches to perfect freedom; and every deviation from these is, in general, a deviation from dignity and greatness.'

Now, without stopping to inquire how much of all this is strictly true;—and, for ourselves, we are not disposed to deny the general justice of the picture;—we would, for the present, merely ask of this learned Theban, how, supposing this to be a correct representation of the English character, the Americans can possibly be the base, worthless, selfish, degraded, ignorant horde of sharpers, which he is pleased to represent us? Is not the American English? Is he not of all Englishmen the most English,—a Hebrew of the Hebrews? Is he not precisely the Englishman, directly and particularly alluded to in the above extract, as 'emigrating to foreign countries, and introducing with him a portion of the arts and sciences of his paternal land:—'converting the barren wilderness and almost impervious forest into smiling and fertile regions, producing supplies for their own necessities, and enabling them to contribute by the channels thus opened to trade and commerce, to the employment, and consequently to the comfort and happiness of tens of thousands:—'imparting energy and life to those around him,'—'giving expression to his principles by unparalleled exertions,'—'founding seminaries of instruction in all countries over which their empire extended?' If the whole English race are to be exalted to the third heaven upon the strength of what the Americans have done, it is rather hard that these same Americans should be sent without ceremony in a body to the opposite region, merely because they did not exhibit quite so much alacrity as might have been wished, in learning Sanscrit of an itinerant British pedagogue.

The most compendious, and at the same time accurate description of the American character which we recollect to have met with, was contained in a remark which we heard in conversation some years ago, from an intelligent native of the continent of Europe.* '*Les Américains*,' said he, '*sont des Anglais*

* The Chevalier de Rayner, whom the writer had the pleasure of knowing as the Minister of the King of Naples at the Court of the Netherlands.

reinforced. Literally,—the Americans are Englishmen *reinforced*:—in other words,—the Americans are more thoroughly English, than the English themselves:—they are a branch of the English race, in which the characteristic qualities of the common stock display themselves in a fuller state of development, than in that which remains in the mother country. Of these qualities, the principal one, and that which determines the existence of the rest, is a bold and lofty spirit of independence, which leads the individual to insist with uncompromising steadiness, at all hazards, upon the security of his personal rights, and which has resulted, even in the mother country, in the establishment of the freest government, at least upon any thing like so large a scale, that the world had ever seen before the formation of ours. The same noble spirit, exhibiting itself in a still more determined and vigorous form in this country, in the first place effected our political emancipation, and afterwards gave us a form of government still more free than that of England. The tendency of free institutions, which afford at the same time a full security for personal rights and property, is to produce among the people prevailing habits of industry, activity, enterprise and the moral qualities, such as temperance, prudence and fidelity in the ordinary social relations, to which these habits naturally lead. These are accordingly the prominent traits in the English character on both sides of the water; and we probably hazard nothing in saying, that they are still more prominent here than in England. The English have been for two or three centuries the most industrious, active, and enterprising nation in Europe. This is amply attested by their superior success in policy and war, in trade, and manufactures, and in almost every department of public and private affairs. Certain as this is, it is not less so, that the Americans have been at least equally industrious, active, and enterprising with their brethren abroad, and, in proportion to their means, have perhaps accomplished even more. If the English, during this period, have greatly augmented their wealth, population, and political influence;—have raised their government from the rank of a second or third, to that of a first rate member of the European commonwealth;—have, in fact, rendered a little island on the North-west coast of Europe one of the leading States of the world, the Americans, on their side, have founded, in an unexplored wilderness, a magnificent empire, which, in every thing that constitutes the real greatness

and glory of a community, already approaches, and, in all probability, will shortly surpass, the parent State.

The equal, if not superior activity, industry and enterprise of the Americans, is evinced in a more familiar way, by the generally acknowledged fact, that, in the business transactions between natives of the two countries, the American is commonly found to succeed better and to realize a larger profit than the Englishman. This fact is confirmed by the testimony of our author. He represents himself as having conversed upon the subject with a great number of his countrymen, who all agreed that 'an American could twist an Englishman round his finger; could see farther into matters, hood-winked, than an Englishman with both his eyes open; could make a fortune by selling the same merchandise by which an Englishman would become bankrupt, and could always gain a living where an Englishman would starve.' 'This,' says Mr. Fidler, 'as far as my own experience goes, or my inquiries could reach, is perfectly accurate.'—He accounts for the fact, on the supposition that Englishmen commonly possess more capital than Americans; as if, in the transaction of business, the possession of capital were a disadvantage. 'The reason of it,' says he, 'is *self-evident*. Americans have rarely much capital: an Englishman with capital is not likely to gain much from an American *without any*. Money, if they continue long together, will always change hands; but no inspired prophet is needed to foretell into whose pocket it will go.' Our author's political economy is as great a curiosity as his natural history. He seems to belong to the same school with the author of the President's Veto on the Bank Bill, where it is maintained that a nation is grievously impoverished and injured by being allowed the use of foreign capital. The old-fashioned doctrine on the subject has always been that the possession of capital is an advantage, and if this be the case, the want of it is a disadvantage, which the Americans have had to contend with, and have overcome, whenever in any branch of business they have met with greater success than the English. When Mr. Fidler says, that 'an Englishman *with capital* is not likely to gain much from an American *without any*,' instead of solving the question, he only states it anew, in a still more difficult form than before. Nor can it be solved on the puerile supposition, that the success of the American is the effect of trick and fraud. In all sorts of business, honesty we all know is the best policy, and the only one that in the long run and on a great scale is attended with profit. The sharper Jenkinson,

in the Vicar of Wakefield, cheats honest Flamborough out of the value of a horse, as regularly as the annual fair came round, notwithstanding which, Jenkinson goes through life as a poor sharper, and Flamborough as a thriving, prosperous and independent franklin. In the same way, Figaro, in the play, employs more genius in intriguing for his master, than would be required for the government of the thirteen kingdoms of Europe, and gets as his reward the wages of a domestic servant. These are true pictures of the course of things in real life, where steady attention and habitual uprightness are the only principles of permanent success, which will of course be more or less brilliant, according to the degree of activity and enterprise by which they are accompanied. The former qualities belong alike to the English and Americans, perhaps in equal degrees, and both nations have accordingly met with the success, which those who possess them deserve and will always secure. If the success of the English in America has been even more remarkable than that of the English in England, it can only be, because the former, under the influence of a still more liberal, though, as we trust, equally stable and protecting constitution, have exhibited in a still higher degree the activity and enterprise to which free government naturally leads.

Look, for example, at the state of the carrying trade between the two countries. The distance from New York to Liverpool is just as great as from Liverpool to New York. The navigation act, which is supposed to have wrested the peaceful sceptre of maritime ascendancy from the Dutch, and placed it in the hands of the English, operates with the same relentless spirit of exclusion upon us, as it does upon 'the swag-bellied Hollanders.' Wages are always higher in this country than they are in England. The comparative want of capital is a disadvantage on our side. Why is it, then, that from three-fourths to nine-tenths of the trade in question always have been and are now in the hands of the Americans? There is no room here for even a suspicion of trick or fraud. Every accidental circumstance is against us. Why is it then, we ask again, that while England has almost the whole of the carrying trade with every other nation with which she deals, with us, and us alone, the case is reversed in this extraordinary way? We know no other rational answer than that our ship-builders, ship-owners, and mariners, notwithstanding the disadvantages under which they originally labored, and to a certain extent even now labor, have, by superior activity and enterprise, overcome the competition of Eng-

land, driven her out of the common market, and taken the whole trade into their own hands. This is the simple common sense view of the subject, and, in our opinion, the correct one.

The same circumstances, which have developed the valuable traits in the common English character to a greater extent in this country than in England, have also brought out the weak points in bolder relief. A stern spirit of personal independence, and a restless activity in matters of merely economical concern, are naturally attended, when they run at all into excess, by an absorption in self, and an indifference to the charities and graces of social life, which throw an air of rudeness over the exterior of society. This has accordingly been always noted by friends and foes as the prominent defect in the English character, as exhibited in Europe, and the justice of the censure seems to be apparent in the general consent with which the homely title of *John Bull*, invented by the wits of Queen Anne's time, has been adopted and sanctioned abroad and at home. This defect,—if we can place any confidence at all in the strictures of our transatlantic friends,—has not been softened by the process of transplantation.

But the most decisive proof, that the English character has, in fact, been *reinforced* on this side of the Atlantic, and exhibits itself here in a more active, complete and vigorous form than it has ever done before, is to be found in the nature and probable results of the political struggle now going on in England. It will hardly be disputed by intelligent observers at a distance, however some of the immediate actors may still disguise the fact from themselves, that this struggle is at bottom a war between American and British principles of government,—between Representative Democracy, with its equality of personal rights, its universal suffrage and its elective magistracies on the one hand, and the British Constitution, with its privileged orders, and established church, its packed House of Commons, and its hereditary King and House of Lords on the other. We say not at present whether the American principles are better or worse in themselves than the British, nor whether it is or is not expedient to attempt to introduce them into England; we only affirm, that these American and British principles are respectively the real watch-words of the two contending parties; and that, if the reformers ultimately obtain complete success, the British Constitution will go down, and the banner of pure representative democracy wave in triumph on the towers of Westminster Hall. It is needless to en-

large on this view of the subject, which we have already set forth very fully in two preceding articles, the general strain of which had the fortune to meet the assent of the most intelligent members of both the political parties in England. The present struggle in the mother country, considered under this point of view, is, therefore, a warfare between the American and English minds; or rather between the English mind, as expanded, developed, invigorated, *reinforced* by exercising itself in untrammelled freedom for more than two centuries in the boundless field of action presented by the New World, and the same mind, as modified by being to a certain extent 'cabin'd, cribb'd, confin'd, bound in,' to the narrower sphere of the little old fast-anchored isle and the British Constitution. This struggle, so considered, is the third in which the same antagonist forces have appeared in hostile array, contending with each other for the ascendancy on different fields and in different forms; but thus far always with the same success. In the first, which was the War of Independence, the American mind disputed with the British, by physical force, for the possession of its own territory,—in fact, its existence; for with the loss of its scene of action, the spirit itself must have soon become extinct. In the second, which was the War of 1812, the battle-field was the ocean; and now the struggle, assuming for the present the form of a merely political and moral controversy, has been carried home to the head-quarters of the enemy. The comparative strength of the two antagonist forces was pretty well tested in the two former trials, and the opinion on that head, to which their results would naturally lead, is not, from present appearances, very likely to be contradicted by that of the pending one. The American mind appears to have already achieved an entire victory over that of England, even on English ground. The whole British community,—the living, thinking, feeling, moving, acting mass, denominated *The Public*, is thoroughly penetrated, imbued, *saturated*,—if we may use the expression,—with American principles. They have already swept down the Test and Corporation acts;—the restraints on the Catholics;—the blood-stained criminal code;—colonial slavery;—the Chinese monopoly, and above all, the old constitution of the House of Commons.

———— Proximus ardet
Ucalegon. ————

They are now fast undermining the Bank;—the national debt;

—the Church ;—the Peerage and the Throne. They already carry all before them in the House of Commons, the real seat of the Government,—occupy the ministerial benches, and thence issue their decrees, in the name of the king. The great modern engine for maintaining political influence, which has been well described as a *Fourth Estate*, more important and powerful than the other three put together,—the Press,—is almost wholly with them. The adversary still presents a feeble show of resistance in the House of Lords, and a few journals hang out here and there the grand hailing sign of distress. It is even rumored that the conqueror of Waterloo is buckling on his rusty armor, and dreaming of a new career of domestic conquest. But what can a few gouty old gentlemen effect, against the almost unanimous will of the people? Even Wellington, though backed by the redoubtable Christopher North,—and no one can estimate the talent and efficiency of either of these champions of legitimacy more highly than we do,—would find himself as powerless, in such a contest, as the renowned Knight of La Mancha and his squire in their encounter with the windmills. Mr. Fidler may call it infatuation:—possibly it is so:—but whether for good or for evil, the decree has gone forth and it must be executed.

It will not answer, therefore, for British writers to continue much longer to disparage the form in which the English character presents itself on this side of the Atlantic, now that Jonathan has, by a sort of Kentish common law, acquired, (morally speaking) possession of the old homestead, and become of course the principal representative of the family.

‘Great let me call him, for he conquered me.’

On our side, we shall ever be among the last to depreciate the value of the common English character, as exemplified in England, or to dwell with any other feelings than respect, admiration, and delight, upon the long glories of British history. In representing the American principles of polity as superseding, even in England, the British Constitution, we mean no disparagement to that celebrated model of government, which was well described by one of the most illustrious of our own statesmen,—before the Constitution of the United States existed,—as ‘the most stupendous fabric of human invention.’ Such, in fact, it then was. Of all the works of man, a real (not paper) constitution of government is by far the highest in order and impor-

tance ; and of all constitutions of government, prior to ours, the British was beyond comparison the best ; the one which most successfully combined the security of the common body politic with an adequate protection for individual rights and liberty. This noble creation had grown up gradually and continued to flourish through the long period of a thousand years. It had, as we said before, rendered a little island in the German ocean one of the leading powers of the world. It had scattered, wherever its influence extended, the seeds of liberty, humanity, civilization and religion. Under its influence, more had been achieved in philosophy, poetry, and all the useful arts and sciences, than had ever been done before by any one community. But, in the general mutability of all human things, it could not be expected that even this noble monument of wisdom, virtue and fortune would endure forever. It was predicted more than a century ago by one of her greatest admirers, that England would finally lose her political institutions, and perish as Rome, Sparta, and Carthage had perished before her.— This fatal period seems to have arrived, somewhat more suddenly than had been anticipated ; and if the signs of the times are at all to be credited, the British Constitution, after surviving, apparently unhurt, the tremendous shocks of the last thirty years, is now breaking up under the operation of a deeply-seated internal principle of destruction. Should this in fact happen, its memory will be always venerated by the friends of liberty, and its history carefully studied as one of the most interesting chapters in the book of political science. In saying that the principles embodied in it have been superseded even in England by those which prevail in this country, we do not even affirm that the latter are in themselves better, that is, truer to the nature of man and society. It remains for America to prove, by centuries of successful practice ; by a thousand years of social order, holding the protecting shield over regulated liberty,—that her creations are as durable and as fortunate, as those of the parent country. Should she succeed in this, she will then have added to the numerous glories of the British form of government that of having left to the world, as its natural offspring, another superior even to itself ;—*matre pulchrâ filia pulchrior*,—and the remark of Fox will be confirmed, that the Constitution of the United States is no other than the British, improved and adorned by the results of the experience of more than ten centuries.